Build a smarter network with Aruba

aruba
a Hewlett Packard Enterprise company

Your small and medium business is constantly evolving. You need the best networking solution, one that is faster, more reliable, and easier to manage. So you can focus on your business--not managing your network.

We've created a high-performance solution that is more flexible, scalable, and offers better investment protection than the competition. Also, our multi-vendor capability means you can manage your entire network, no matter whose networking equipment you have installed.

This guide outlines the differences between Aruba and Cisco Meraki so you can make the smarter and better choice.

Aruba vs. Cisco Meraki: A comparison

	Aruba	Cisco Meraki
Flexibility/Scalability		
Network management options	**Local, cloud, or on-premises**	**Cloud only**
Investment protection	**Yes**	**No**
Multi-vendor network management	**Yes**	**No**
Performance		
Switches	**More PoE power, multi-gigabit Ethernet, and uplink capacity**	**Lower PoE power and uplink capacity**
Wireless	**30% better than Meraki APs with similar radio specs**	**Lower performance than Aruba**
Optimized user experience		
RF innovations	**Yes**	**No**
Wi-Fi interference mitigation	**Yes**	**No**
Optimized switch configuration with APs	**Yes**	**No**
Tunnel Node	**Yes**	**No**
Application visibility and control	**2,600 applications**	**115 applications**
Business continuity		
Manage network if connectivity fails	**Yes**	**No**
No cloud license required	**Yes**	**No**
Security		
Government-grade solutions	**Yes**	**No**

Flexibility/Scalability

Investment protection: Aruba offers a flexible and scalable architecture that allows you to move from controllerless to controller-based configurations on the same APs and from cloud-based to multi-vendor network management without buying new access points and switches. This means as your business grows and evolves, your investment is fully protected.

Multi-vendor network management: Aruba AirWave offers end-to-end visibility and control over mobile users and IoT devices on multi-vendor, multi-site wired and wireless networks. It includes user location and mapping capabilities, real-time monitoring of apps, users, and non-RF metrics, historical reporting, and troubleshooting.

Performance

Switches: Aruba switches can scale with more PoE+ power, faster multi-gig access, and high-performance uplinks, so you can continue to grow your network.

Wireless: Aruba APs performed 30%+ better than Meraki APs with similar radio specifications in Aruba lab tests.[1]

With **Zero Touch Provisioning**, you can directly ship Aruba Instant APs, switches, and branch controllers to remote sites where users without technical expertise can easily power them up and connect them to the network. Configuration is automatically pushed from Aruba Central—so your network is up and running in minutes.

Optimized user experience

RF innovations: Aruba's ClientMatch and AirTime Fairness ensure WLAN client performance isn't compromised under any circumstance, and fix the "sticky client problem" so users stay connected even when they're roaming throughout your facility.

Wi-Fi interference mitigation: Aruba APs identify the source of interference and mitigate it in less than 120 seconds. Meraki, on the other hand, can't mitigate any Wi-Fi interference.

Optimized switch configuration with APs: Aruba switches auto-configure PoE priority and more to ensure optimized support of Aruba APs.

Tunnel Node: Aruba switches with Tunnel Node provide a consistent and secure user experience across wired and wireless networks.

Business continuity

Manage network if connectivity fails: Aruba APs and switches can be locally managed (no license required) if connectivity to the cloud ever fails. This means you can always make critical changes like adding new users, re-routing traffic, and monitoring your network.

No cloud license required: In addition to management via the cloud and on-premises, Aruba APs can be managed locally, which requires no licensing.

Security

Government-grade solutions: Aruba is a leading provider of government-grade WLAN solutions with a number of key federal security certifications. Plus, select Aruba switches are TAA certified.

[1] Internal lab testing performed February 2017 with Aruba 310 Series Instant APs and comparable Cisco Meraki APs, measuring TCP downstream throughput for 50 clients.

How do switches stack up?

	Aruba 2930F 8G	Meraki MS220-8P	Aruba 2930F 24G	Meraki MS225-24	Aruba 2930M 48G	Meraki MS350-48FP
Switching capacity	56 Gbps	20 Gbps	128 Gbps	128 Gbps	176 Gbps	176 Gbps
Routing	L3 (Static/RIP/ Access OSPF)	L2 (Static routing only)	L3 (Static/RIP/ Access OSPF)	L2 (Static routing only)	L3 (Static/RIP/ Access OSPF)	Static, RIP, OSPF, VRRP
Stacking	Yes—up to 4	No	Yes—up to 4	Yes—up to 8	Yes—up to 10	Yes—up to 8
Multi-gigabit Ethernet	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Uplinks	2 x 10 GbE (SFP+)	2 x 1 GbE (SFP)	4 x 10 GbE (SFP+)	4 x 10 GbE (SFP+)	Modular: 10 GbE, 40 GbE	4 x 10 GbE (SFP+)
PoE+ power maximum	125W	124W	370W	370W	1440W	740W
Cloud and on-premises network management	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

With better stacking, more PoE+, and faster uplinks, Aruba switches enable you to grow your network more effectively. Smart Rate multi-gigabit ports provide higher speeds over existing cabling so you can take advantage of the fastest Wave 2 APs.

Aruba's license-free switches easily integrate with cloud-based Aruba Central or AirWave and can be managed with a simple Web GUI. They come with built-in security features—like Tunnel Node—and integrate seamlessly with Aruba APs to simplify deployment, provisioning, and management.

Meraki switches, meanwhile, lack the scalability of multi-gig Ethernet and ability to add PoE+ power, which can limit your network growth. They do not support the flexibility of both cloud and on-premises management, the security of Tunnel Node, or programmable REST APIs. Local web-based management is limited.

"Aruba is faster, more reliable, and easier to manage."
- Justin Hart, Blue Dog RV

See the video ›

How do access points measure up?

	Aruba 300 Series APs	Meraki AP MR33	Aruba 310 Series APs	Meraki AP MR42
AP specs	5 GHz 802.11ac 2x2 MU-MIMO	5 GHz 802.11ac 2x2 MU-MIMO	5 GHz 802.11ac 4x4 MU-MIMO	5 GHz 802.11ac 3x3 MU-MIMO
	2.4 GHz 802.11n 2x2 SU-MIMO	2.4 GHz 802.11n 2x2 SU-MIMO	2.4 GHz 802.11n 2x2 SU-MIMO	2.4 GHz 802.11n 3x3 SU-MIMO
Max. data rate	1.6 Gbps	1.3 Gbps	2 Gbps	1.9 Gbps
Supported client devices (per radio)	Up to 256	Up to 128	Up to 256	Up to 128
Wireless intrusion prevention system	Partial or dedicated	Dedicated radio	Partial or dedicated	Dedicated radio
RF optimization*	Yes	No	Yes	No
Built-in web content filtering without additional hardware	Yes	No	Yes	No

* *Enhanced client roaming, interference mitigation and Airtime Fairness*

Aruba APs come with built-in Adaptive Radio Management (ARM) technology, which optimizes wireless performance, provides airtime fairness, and ensures APs stay clear of RF interference. AppRF technology leverages deep packet inspection to classify and block, prioritize, or limit bandwidth for over 2,600 enterprise apps or groups of apps. Intelligent Power Monitoring (IPM) allows the AP to continuously monitor and report power consumption and autonomously "decide" to disable certain capabilities.

Aruba APs offer higher aggregate throughput and come with built-in web content filtering to keep your network safe from on-line threats and malicious websites without requiring an additional security appliance.

Cisco Meraki APs, on the other hand, lack RF optimization to enhance client roaming and mitigate interference. Their web-content filtering requires additional hardware, adding costs. And cloud-based licenses are required for network management. There's no flexibility or investment protection to move to multi-vendor management.

Aruba is the smarter, better networking solution

Across the board, Aruba offers a high-performance solution that is more flexible, more scalable, and provides better investment protection. It is multi-vendor capable and easier to manage so you can focus on your business.

With limited network management features that can only be managed in the cloud, Cisco Meraki products aren't designed to grow with your business. Lack of multi-vendor support and required cloud licensing means you're stuck with a single vendor, limiting your options in the future.

Aruba allows you to build your network your way--it's the faster, more reliable, and easier to manage solution. Find the right solution for your business with **Aruba Networking Product Wizard**.

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